

Dear Co-Chairs Cohen and Gresko, Vice-Chairs Slap and Palm, Ranking Members Miner and Harding, and members of the Environment Committee,

On behalf of Cycling Sports Group located in Wilton, CT, I write to ask you to support Raised House Bill 5291, An Act Authorizing Bonding for Bikeways, Greenways, and Recreational Trails.

This important bill would increase the bond authorization for the Recreational Trails and Greenways Grants program to \$6 million. In Fall 2021 DEEP issued a request for recreational trails proposals with only \$3 million available. It received 65 applications requesting over \$22 million, of which the highly ranked proposals alone totaled over \$7 million. Although \$3 million was granted to twenty worthy projects, we expect the ongoing need for investments in Connecticut's outdoor recreation infrastructure to continue.

Trail systems bring important economic stimulus to communities. Examples of this can be found all over the country from Bentonville, Arkansas to Moab, UT, to Duluth, Minnesota. Trail systems elevate communities to become destination locations, not just places to pass through. Simultaneously, robust trail networks benefit the health of local communities with safe, accessible access to outdoor recreation.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this matter.

Sincerely,

Adam Briere
Sourcing Manager
Cycling Sports Group